THE
Fickle Courtier,
OR,
Love in a Quandary.
A
POEM.

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Printed in the YEAR 1710.
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PROLOGUE.

A *Doubtful Courtier, who had better Luck*
Than wiſer Men, into a Damp was ſtruck
bout his Choice; Whether he had better Wed,
Wife, *a* **Fair**, *a* **Chaſte**, *or* **Wealthy** *Maid:*
eing 'tis as rare all theſe in One to find,
real Temperance in a Soldier's Mind.
bout this Choice, and for this honeſt End,
, o'er a Glaſs, conſults a truſty Friend:
s Friend, at firſt, did ſcruple to adviſe
ſuch a tickliſh Point as Marriage *is:*
being preſt, he there ſits down again,
d, by the dull Light of his cloudy Brain,
writes the following Lines, to gain his End,
keep his Counſel, and preſerve his Friend,
makes each one count up her proper Score;
d leaves his Friend's Choice *free, as 'twas before.*

THE
Fickle Courtier,
OR,
Love in a Quandary.

IN a *May*-Morning, on a Meadow green,
Beauty, Chaſtity, **Wit**, and *Wealth*, were
ſeen,
And heard to ſtart the Queſtion, in a Bower,
Which was the worthieſt of all the Four?
For want of Advocates, it was agreed
That each one of 'em her own Cauſe ſhou'd plead
Tho' all of them did after Glory thirſt,
Beauty obtain'd the Honour to ſpeak firſt;
The reſt reſolved her Defects to ſcan;
Silence commanded, **Beauty** thus began.

Beauty,

I Think I need not go about to ſhew
My firſt Original, ſince you all know,
The Gods at firſt, by Heaven's Decree, we find,
Made all Things beautiful, each in its Kind.
When **Beauty** firſt appeared to the Sight
Of all the Creatures, ſhe gave ſuch a Light;
That like a bright Noon-Sun in Glory mov'd,
All that beheld her both admir'd and lov'd
And by a general Council at her Birth,
Proclaimed her ſole Monarch of the Earth.
When firſt ſhe mounted on the Throne to ſit,
Then all the Creatures did to her ſubmit.
Shepherds ador'd her, in their homely Caves;
And powerful Monarchs did become her Slaves;

Wiſe Men do worſhip, vanquiſh'd by her Charm
And Fools deſire to hug her in their Arms.
If Pity her to rich Mens Parlours brings,
They think themſelves far happier than Kings:
And if ſhe viſit ſome poor Mens Abodes,
They deem 'em honour'd next unto the Gods.
The Strength of *Sampſon*, Beauty overcame:
By *David*'s Chaſtity ſhe did the ſame.
The wiſeſt Man that ever yet was heard,
Yielded to Beauty, when ſhe firſt appear'd.
And where's the boldeſt Man that beareth Arms
That is not forc'd to yield to Beauty's Charms
So that by all Men it muſt be confeſt,
Beauty is preferable to all the reſt;
Becauſe no earthly Power can withſtand
Her Force, when ſhe is pleaſed to command.
By Age, as well as Youth, it is confeſt,
In all Eſtates, a beauteous Wife is beſt.

Wealt

Wealth.

THIS elegant Oration being heard,
The other Three, with all their Art pre-prepar'd,
To make their Cauſes good; with Golden Face,
Wealth was the next aſſum'd the Speaker's Place;
Who, with high Looks, and Geſtures proud as Hell,
Imperiouſly began her Tale to tell.
I ſhall not trouble my ſelf much to defend
That Cauſe, which hath each Lawyer for its Friend.
Wealth is the Word which makes the World ſubmit,
Wiſe Men, and Fools, and all will plead for it.
The higheſt Monarch that ſits on a Throne,
If Wealth forſake him, all his Friends are gone;

And the poor Beggar, who is cloath'd in Raggs,
He's loved by all, if Fortune fills his Baggs:
None diſapproves him, tho' he tell them Lies;
And tho' he be a Fool, he's counted wiſe.
Heaven doth Beauty upon Women place,
To puniſh Fools, who chuſe them by the Face;
For if they were not Rich, nor Wiſe, nor Fair,
To look on them, ſcarce any Man would care.
But if they poſſeſs any of the Three,
Some Sons of Men, may with their Suit agree.
Beauty's a Fire, which quickly burns a Fool,
And leads its Lovers to Experience School;
A Snare to thoſe on whom it is beſtow'd;
Making them, Devil-like, both vain and proud.
If Bags of Wealth do not with Beauty grow,
Give me the Bags, and let the Beauty go.
When glittering Treaſure in the Purſe appears,
It makes all Faces handſome, tho' in Years.

For in the Light, Gold doth with Pleaſure ſtrike;
And in the Dark, all Faces are alike.
The poor Man may have Pleaſure in his Life;
But he may ſing that gets a Wealthy Wife.
The Wiſe, the Chaſte, the Fair, may have Renown;
But glorious Wealth alone deſerves the Crown.

Wit.

THUS ended *Wealth*; which when the reſt did hear,
Wit was the next aſſum'd the Speakers Chair;
Who with a Tongue more eloquent than proud,
Franckly begins to plead her Cauſe aloud:
My Friends, you've fairly heard what hath been ſaid,
You've heard proud Wealth, and wanton Beauty plead;

Now tis my turn, to tell you I think fit,
Both Wealth and Beauty pleaded without Wit.
I muſt confeſs, I do not here intend,
In pleading my own Cauſe, much Time to ſpend;
If *Beauty*, *Wealth*, and *Chaſtity*, all Three,
Will yield to Reaſon, they muſt yield to me.
For the Two firſt, if Wit be ſet aſide,
Are Plants of Hell, and ſprung from Roots of Pride;
Was it not *Beauty* firſt found out the Glaſs,
With Colours to Adulterate the Face:
And like a Devil, fallen from her firſt Abode,
She proudly dares correct the Works of God.
And when all's done, if we do rightly ſound,
Scarce any compleat Beauty can be found;
She that of Beauty would be choſe Miſtreſs,
Muſt all theſe following Properties poſſeſs.
She muſt have Three Things black, and Three Things white,
And Three Things red, wherein to take Delight;

She

She muſt have Three Things long, and Three Things ſhort,
And Three Things ſoft, her Beauty to ſupport;
And Three Things hard, and if all theſe can meet
In one rare Female, then ſhe is complete;
A perfect Beauty, let him love who will,
All theſe are but External Beauties ſtill.
If you, my Hearers, bid me draw the Screen,
And tell you what the Things aforeſaid mean;
Beauty, I know, will long this Thing to hear,
And as for *Wealth*, her Wrath I do not fear.
I humbly beg Pardon of Chaſtity,
And if ſhe pleaſe to hear me patiently,
Or elſe retire; I vow my Meaning's Chaſte,
The Cauſe I plead will ſure excuſe the reſt.
But rather than affront her with my Rhime,
I will explain it at another Time.
And as for Wealth, her high ambitious Tone,
Threw mighty *Nebuchadnezar* from his Throne;

Becauſe

Becauſe I was not at his ſumptuous Feaſts,
He was turn'd out to graze among the Beaſts.
A hectoring Fop, whoſe Father lately died,
And left him Pelf, wherewith to feed his Pride;
He to proud *Beſs* is married, and anon,
In Two Years Time their Pelf, not Pride, is gone
For *China*, Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate,
For Silks, and Servants, to his dainty Mate;
Mercers and Drugſters, for their Money cry,
And to the Camp our Fop is forc'd to fly;
Or on the High-Way, on a borrowed Steed,
Ventures his Neck to get his Baſtards bread.
Beauty and Wealth doth well with Vice agree,
But, I by Wiſdom, from ſuch Stains am free.
All Sublimary Things are at my beck,
And none can go Aſtray, whom I direct.
The King, the Prieſt, and Magiſtrate, all Three,
For all their Happineſs are bound to me.
I'll ſay no more, leaſt I ſhould ſeem to doubt,
The gaining of the Cauſe I am about.

Chaſtity.

THIS being heard, then modeſt Chaſtity
Stands up, and thus begins with Gravity;
When cunning Lawyers at the Bar do fight,
The firſt that ſpeaks, ſeems always in the right;
Until another wiſer comes, to plead,
And quite refutes all that the firſt Man ſaid.
A Third, to looſe a Client's-Cauſe, being loth,
He by wiſe Reaſoning overcomes them both.
Perhaps a Fourth Man upon Trial, ſhall
Be, in the end, found righter than 'em all.
So 'tis with us, I tell you what is true;
I plead for Truth, you Victory purſue:
I let you all ſpeak firſt, becauſe I know
My Cauſe, to yours, is juſt like Five to Two.

Beauty and *Wealth* have been condemn'd by Wit,
And without Chaſtity they are not fit,
In any vertuous Company to ſit.
And *Wit* her ſelf, for all that ſhe can ſay,
May be condemn'd at laſt, as well as they.
Altho' her Cauſe ſeem fair, ſhe can't deny,
Her Wit's but Knavery, without Chaſtity.
Wit miſapplied, or not well underſtood,
Hath done more Miſchief in the World than Good.
She may have Wit enough to gather Pelf,
By Over-reaching others, to enrich her ſelf:
She may have Wit for to deceive her Friends,
And carry't fair to all, for her own Ends;
But ſince her Wit is Cunning, more than Chaſte,
It makes her Cauſe far worſe than all the reſt.
Wealth, *Wit*, and *Beauty*, ſignify no more,
Than curious Off-Sets to a common Whore:
The great Poſſeſſor of theſe Three muſt lie,
Soil'd, ſtain'd, and blaſted, without Chaſtity.

The *London* Cuckolds fairly Witneſs can,
Wealth, *Wit*, and *Beauty*, ruin many a Man.
Tho' theſe Three Things do keep the World in aw,
They're the Three worſt that ever Mankind ſaw.
Beauty's a Snare, *Wealth*'s follow'd by a Curſe,
And *Wit* has always Wickedneſs for its Nurſe.
But where Virtuous Chaſtity doth walk her Round,
There true Content, and laſting Love are found;
There *Wit* and Beauty both together meet,
And makes *Wealth*, even in Poverty, compleat.
Chaſtity is both fair, and rich, and wiſe;
I under that Name, all the reſt compriſe.
Our Diſpute firſt began concerning Worth,
And each of you, as well's you could, held forth:
If all Men ſay not, I have gain'd the Crown,
I'll be content to lay the Cudgels down.
Tho' in this wicked Age, not one in Ten
Will right the Juſt, but all the Richeſt Men:

But if the Judge my Dignity conceal,
Unto the Reader's Judgment I'll appeal;
Let him confirm what I have ſaid before,
And Crown the worthieſt; I'll ſay no more.

FINIS.